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the emily

DESTROY
STEREOTYPES!
SLASH EXPLOITATION!
F*@\$ OPRESSION!



volume 16 number 2
december 1997

Learning the Hard Way

This is Emily number two, and I write that without enthusiasm, 'cause we hadn't planned to produce another Emily. The plan of attack was to alternate between producing an Emily and then producing an Ain't I a Woman. Ain't I a Woman is a paper dealing with race, gender, and colonization, three very important themes. This was supposed to be our first Ain't I a Woman, but it's not.

I write this mid-production weekend, when we are faced with the fact that we did not do enough work on this paper; we did not get enough submissions, we did not do enough outreach and most importantly although we had the opportunity, we did not educate ourselves.

There was a lot of discussion about Ain't I a Woman before we decided to do the paper. Many white women felt they would have nothing to contribute, and we were wary about issues around appropriation and guilt. We decided to go ahead with the issue, but it managed to fall apart in the end. I could blame this on a lot of things, lack of time between Emilys, school overload at this point in the term, but mainly we have to blame ourselves.

I'm upset because we weren't able to come through and produce an Ain't I a Woman, and I'm upset because we may have lost a valuable collective member in this process.

There will be an Ain't I a Woman before the year ends. We will take all the lessons we learned from producing this paper, and make something great.

There are some articles in this paper that deal with race, gender and colonization, as there should be in every paper, but we did not succeed in making it the main focus. You can still learn from reading this paper, if you too make note of the lack of analysis of race, gender, and colonization inside.

Please, as you notice the void, try to fill it yourself, the deadline for the next Ain't I a Woman is February, plenty of time for you to grace us with your brilliance.

- nicole.

RECOMMENDED READING

2 by Minnie Bruce Pratt:

REBELLION - contains essays dealing with being White and anti-racist. Doesn't dwell on guilt. Useful for White women who want examples of other White women's experiences with racism.

S/HE - The author is a femme. Her partner is a transgendered butch (Leslie Feinberg, author of Stone Butch Blues). Personal and beautifully written short prose on gender identity and desire.

Anything by Chrystos. If you want clear, she's got it. Chrystos doesn't pull her punches. Mostly poetry. Life as a First Nations woman and lesbian erotica.

Leslie Marmon Silko: Storyteller
Changed this reader's life. A Laguna Pueblo woman's autobiography, weaving strands of fiction, poetry, photography and family history to give the reader a sense of the oral tradition from which it stems. Contributes to an understanding of the communal consciousness.

RESOURCE MANUAL FOR A LIVING REVOLUTION: A HANDBOOK OF SKILLS AND TOOLS FOR SOCIAL CHANGE ACTIVISTS (New Society Publishers) A classic. Everything from consensus, building connected neighborhoods, and civil disobedience, to feeding hundreds of people at camps.

Piece of my Heart: a Lesbian of Colour Anthology
Poems, essays, interviews, stories. Most of what I know about the complexities of oppression has come from lesbians of colour. Lots of Canadian content.

Audre Lourde's essay, "Uses of the Erotic" This essay on living with passion is richly valuable. Read it again and again!

Larissa Lai: When Fox is a Thousand Lai's first novel set in Vancouver, connecting a contemporary young Chinese-Canadian lesbian, a fox ghost about to reach her 1000th birthday, and a long-ago Chinese poet. (Lai's critical writing has also been published in a bunch of different Canadian arts mags, and her poetry is swell!)

LEE MARACLE: I am Woman - a collection of poems and prose that is designed to be a feminist sociological text. Very inspirational!

upcoming assertion deadlines & themes

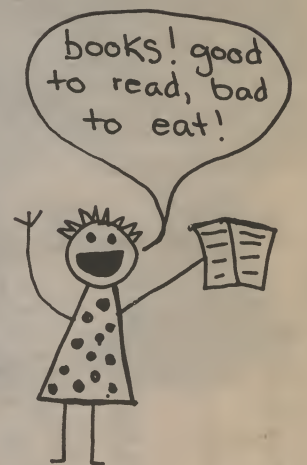
the emily - passion!

sex & spirituality
creativity

women doing what they gotta do
deadline: 13 Jan 98

Ain't I A Woman

theme undecided - send us your assertions/ideas early
and we can figure it out from there
deadline: 13 February



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Surviving the Holocaust: Rescha's Story

by Lydia Del Bianco

At a time where political correctness has us questioning every action, huge injustices like the Holocaust are overwhelming, even unreal in the eyes of many. But it was very real for one woman who lives to tell of her survival, and make it real for everyone.

Her name is Rescha. She spent her happy childhood in Warsaw, Poland, the only girl in a family of three boys. Her life was filled with comfort and friends. As a Jew, this life was shattered when the war broke out in 1939. She was only 18.

The Nazi soldiers began to take over all the Jewish communities. Fearing her capture, her parents sent her to live with a non-Jewish family in a small village. Soon after, her family was taken to concentration camps. She would never see them again.

She was caught weeks later by SS men while walking in the village, and was transported to a concentration camp near a munitions factory. She was spared from the harsh labour of the camps because of her fluent German, which got her a job translating. Her camp was filled with young women, some still children. An SS man beat them regularly, without cause, to show his authority. She was exempted from this by the Polish man for whom she was translating, who didn't want her harmed. "That was the worst nightmare for [the German], that he couldn't touch me", she said. The man took revenge for what seemed like an injustice of some kind by beating the other women harder, especially if she objected. She remained there for some time, surviving on sawdust bread.

She was then moved from camp to camp. She worked twelve hours a day checking cartridge fluid. She and the other workers were forced to walk to each camp, and slept on straw bunks. Because she had been captured in July she only had a thin dress and sandals to wear, and winter was setting in.

As she worked, she recognized an old family friend who lived near one of the camps. They spoke occasionally, and when he said he would be going to Warsaw, she asked him to get an old coat and boots from family friends, just to keep warm. He returned empty handed to her utter disbelief. She was shocked that these "friends" whom she had considered family, had refused her simple request. As an excuse they stated that they need her parent's signature, knowing they had already been taken to the camps.

The Germans gave her a rough jacket to keep her from freezing, and heeled shoes, impossible to walk in. "I needed heels like I needed a hole in the head."

In 1944 the Eastern front of the war was opened, and Russian troops began to invade. The Nazis moved her and the other workers by cattle wagon. She was in close quarters with over seventy women for more than ten days, without food or water. At the end of the ordeal half the women were dead, and those still alive

were malnourished and weak. When the wagon was finally opened, Rescha remembers the kindness of a German woman who gave her water. "I will never forget her."

They were examined naked by SS men, if so much as a blemish was seen, they were shot. The same kind woman who gave her water also gave her lipstick to make her appear healthy, so she would not be shot. American soldiers bombed around them, unknowing of their presence.

As the Russians came nearer, they were moved more and more frequently. Near the end, rumors were heard that they were being taken to the infamous camp of Krakow, one of the worst in Europe. In her German heels she walked with the other prisoners to her fate, with an "X" for identification on her back. Her will to live severely battered, she decided to take a risk. With a few other women, she ran into the woods. The soldiers, too worried about their own eventual capture, did not even bother to shoot.

With only the clothes on her back, a tiny piece of soap she had traded for a piece of bread, and salt she craved for her depleted health, she removed the identifying coat. She made up a believable story about being bombed out of her home, and was taken in by a German woman and her child in a small town near by. She bathed in warm water for the first time in years, ate real food, and helped in the care of the vegetable garden which the family used as income. "I already forgot how to live like that." She hung onto the small packet of salt for years afterwards, as a reminder of what she had survived.

Finally the Allies liberated the camps, and sent her off to a doctor. She was given a few commodities (sugar, tea, coffee, chocolate, etc.) which she shared with the kind woman who had given her shelter. The woman had remained kind to her even after she revealed she was Jewish. She was free.

She lived in Germany, specifically Munich, for some time after the war because "it was safe there with the American troops." She met her husband there, survivor of similar circumstances, and was married. Due to the limited housing, her family (she and her husband and child) lived in a small apartment with a Nazi member, which was difficult for her, especially when the man played with her young son. "I wanted one small piece of a room for myself...for so long...there was never privacy." They moved to Canada when her son was three years old.

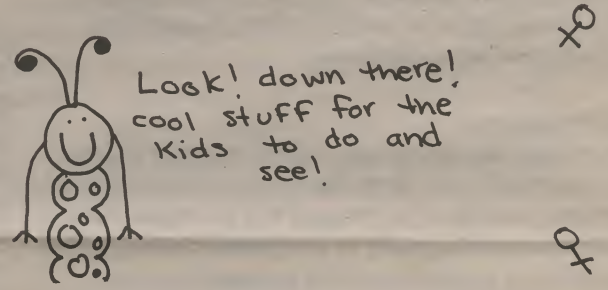
The only other survivors in her family were her sister-in-law and her niece. All the rest are presumed to have died, and she has never learned of where they died or where they were buried. She sees this damage to the Jewish culture as particularly sad. "When you go to a wedding or a birthday party and you see all the relatives, you feel sad, especially for the children."

That is her story. Her future, now with a grown son, is bright, despite the loss of her husband in 1981. She enjoys walking, good friendships and family. She does volunteer work for women's organizations and for her synagogue. She does not hate. "I don't hate them, the Germans. I don't hate anyone because it's bad for me. Hate eats you up."

Her amazing story of survival is kept alive in the hearts of all who can listen, and those who refuse to hate.

For further information on the Holocaust please attend the Symposiums offered at UVic. Please contact Dr. Phyllis Senese at the History Department for further information, without her efforts this story would have not been told.

Thank you, Rescha, for sharing your story with us.



♀'s Centre update!

Memorial Coffeehouse. December 5th, 1-4pm

There will be a coffee house in the SUB multi-purpose for women and children only. Food, entertainment, and safe space will be provided for women to discuss issues, remember, and provide support. Rajah Chrimes who performed at the Emily lounge night will play again here.

Social Time Second Week of January

The women's centre will host a fun little social for the gals. Check the bulletin board outside the women's centre in the new year for further details.

Volunteer opportunity

Help plan events for International Women's Week is (the week March 8th), and National Eating Disorders week is (February 1st to the 7th). Wanna volunteer your skills and enthusiasm? Drop by the women's centre for info.

CRD Race Relations Association Anti-Racism Advocacy and Counselling

Call for volunteers:
Event planning for the UN Day to Eliminate Racial Discrimination, including a rally on March 21, 1998 is happening now. Your involvement would be valued.

Office Party Wed. December 10, 4-7pm at 220 Bay St.

RSVP for office party, check office hours, or talk with anti-racism support staff member and counsellor Harinder Dhillon @ 380-7311

CFUV RADIO FM 102

Keep your ears open for 4 solid days of First Nations radio coming up in December. In the meantime, check OFFBEAT magazine in the same box as you picked up Aint I A Woman, for women's shows, queer shows, politix, ethnic music and activist folk. There's a show for everyone!

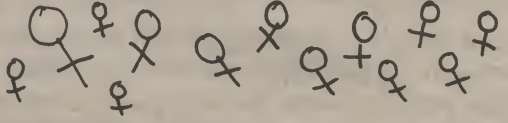


Wear a red armband on Nov. 24

PUBLIC ART IN PROGRESS

Tapestry Weaving — Watch as the 6' x 8' TAPIS Victoria Cool Aid Society Community Tapestry nears completion. Try your hand at weaving a pass or two, ask questions, check out the design, made by TAPIS and Victoria Cool Aid Society clients and employees. (Cool Aid runs projects and a shelter for homeless youth.)

The current location for the tapestry is CIBC on Douglas at View. Weaving happens from Monday to Friday, 930am-4pm.



**we are the women of
color collective.....**

we are a group of culturally diverse women open to all self-identified women of color, whether you are a community member or a student at UVic we meet regularly both on campus (in our space in the upper SUB) and off campus (in the form of potlucks, or whatever) office hours will be posted as well as meeting times



why the women of color collective?
...to seek pride in our difference, to celebrate it, to no longer assimilate.

what do we do?
...in this old school Victorian town, we act as many things: as a support group, as social and political activists, as artists, as creators, as friends...

OUR FUTURE PLANS for this year are things such as a women and people of color ART SHOW, a FILM FESTIVAL, numerous ZINES, a DANCE, a DRUM FESTIVAL and various SPEAKERS.

DIVERSITY is fun: remember there is more to literature, art, music....LIFE, than dead white men...

Reflections On Fighting APEC: from the conference to the streets

by Sarah Hunt

My understanding of the economic conglomerate called APEC (Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation), a force of powerful men and their respective "economies" who represent both "first world" and "third world" interests, has been slowly developing over the previous year. The issues which surround APEC are very close to my heart and my academic interests, as I am dealing with the effects of colonization every day, as an Indigenous woman of mixed ancestry. The agenda that APEC leaders have been discussing, and continue to discuss, is one of neo-colonization. A new global corporate agenda determines the fate of so many Indigenous people's lives all over the world, without them even knowing the motivation behind this looming presence: unrestricted movement of capital. One of the main goals of APEC is to liberalize the mobility of money (while restricting the movement of people). APEC is not about people, it is about economics.

While I do not know much about the issues that were discussed within the actual APEC forum, due to the fact that the mainstream media is misleading to say the least, and that ninety percent of APEC meetings were held behind closed doors, I do know a bit about the effects that corporate globalization is having on women and communities around the world. I attended the International Women's Conference Against APEC, as well as a rally held in what we now call Vancouver on November 23. From these two forums, which discussed the effects that APEC is having on people and the changes that it is proposing to make, I had very different experiences and acquired a range of knowledge that is vital to my understanding of capitalism, globalization, and colonization.

the conference

In attending the conference, I was first struck by how removed we all were from the real lives of women who are dying because of agreements and ideologies such as APEC, and yet the reality of it all made itself felt by the insistence of the very powerful and moving women who were there. First, as an Aboriginal woman, I was very thankful for the welcome given by Faye Edgar, a Coast Salish woman who gave her permission for us to be there on her people's land. This permission is crucial for me, as I respect the fact that if she, as a representative of her people, had said that she did not want us to speak there, we should not have gone on with our plan of action. It was also important to remind people from the beginning that we were able to be in Vancouver, because of colonization, and were benefitting from colonial and capitalist ideologies.

While there were many issues discussed throughout the conference, the most fundamental question that was repeatedly raised, and danced around somewhat, was

the issue of whether or not to engage with the government on improving their oppressive structures. There was clearly a division within the participants, as well as the represented organizations, as to whether or not changes could possibly be made from within white supremacist capitalist patriarchal structures. Some women made the argument that we need to fight for human rights clauses, and for the protection of Indigenous lands through treaty agreements and inclusion in other charters which govern the lives of people in our respective countries. These women saw that policies which protect women's rights are crucial within unions, governments, and our own feminist organizations, so as to provide a safety net for marginalized women, and a place for our rights to be acknowledged.

On the other hand, some women saw that the imposed colonialist structures are inherently oppressive and that changes within these structures will only serve to keep them in power and will keep women bound in a position of oppression and inferiority. The question was raised: are we trying to get a piece of the pie, or are we trying to destroy the pie altogether? Human rights agreements are occurring right now in Canada, despite the agreements that are in place to protect human rights and women's rights.

Human rights came up quite frequently at the conference because, in the world of APEC dignitaries and their elitist language, human rights is a taboo subject. The media told us that our prime minister brought up human rights violations in some of the APEC meetings, and that this was surprising. Did anyone question why this is so surprising? No, but at the conference I attended, women spoke of the lack of concern for human beings, as well as the risk that governments take in bringing up environmental, human rights, and other abuses that occur. Bringing up these things with other APEC "member economies" can jeopardize trade relationships, and that would be bad for our economy.

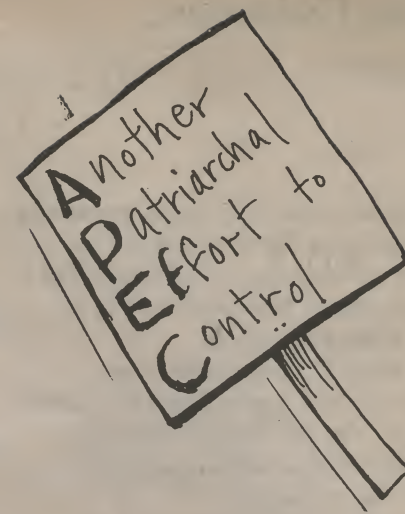
Another key issue in my experience of the Women's Conference Against APEC was Indigenous People's Rights. I attended the focus group around this topic and was happily surprised by the diversity of issues that were brought up. Four main areas were brought up: labour, human rights, environment, and economic and social development. Issues such as child apprehension, substance abuse, suicide, activism, urban versus reserve life, cultural genocide, parenting, and other very crucial, emotional topics were brought up through strong women telling their stories. Many women told personal accounts of what it means to live as an Indigenous woman in Canada, and I wished that all the women at the conference could have heard what these women had to say. While the rest of the conference

schedule included Indigenous women from Canada, it was in this forum that the real issues were hashed out.

One of the key issues for me was questions of land control, as agreements between "economies" or governments are continuing to overlook the rights that Indigenous people have over their lands. While we think, in Canada, that treaties are in the process of being made and that Aboriginal peoples are on the road to healing, recovery, and empowerment, Indigenous women from elsewhere have told us that their land is being taken out from under them and that treaty agreements mean nothing to these global economic forces. We do not need to look very far back in Canadian history to find examples of Indigenous peoples being removed from rich land and traditional territories, in the name of capitalism and the Canadian economy. One comment that struck me particularly hard was the assertion that treaty agreements between bands and the Canadian government is legalized theft of our homelands, which I hadn't really thought of in quite that way before. The more I think about it the more respect I have for this position, and I see the division between engagement and non-engagement becoming clearer in my mind.

One other crucial point is that Indigenous leaders have been set up by the government's imposed structures, through the Indian Act, to be male. Therefore, the representatives that are engaging with the government are men and do not always have the best interests of women in mind. Internalized racism and the mindset of the colonisers prevent Indigenous peoples from working as cohesive groups, and often move people in positions of power to try to grab for a piece of the pie. In the face of starvation and death, this is understandable, but we need to educate our people to work with one another and see that sexism, racism, and other systems of oppression keep us oppressed, especially when we use them against one another.

There are many more crucial issues that were brought up through discussions in the Indigenous Peoples Rights forum, as well as the rest of the Women's Conference. For the purposes of this article, I will move on to my experiences at the rally, so as to include a balance between my two main experiences in actively fighting APEC.



the rally

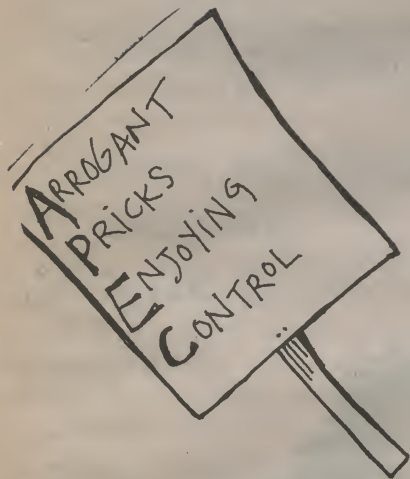
When I arrived at the rally in the Plaza of Nations in the downtown area of what we now call Vancouver, I was overwhelmed by the sights, sounds, colors, words, songs, movement, smells, the feel of it all. Completely overwhelmed. My companion and I stood in amazement as the protest formed around us and people

prepared to walk, scream, cry, stomp and yell against the forces of global capitalism. There were representatives from so many parts of the world, the nation, the city, bringing with them demands for freedom from the constraints of APEC. Women, men, and children alike were dressed ready to fight in whatever way they felt most empowered. A huge contingency from the Free Tibet! march, which had occurred just before the Walk for Global Justice, practised their cheers and provided me with a rhythm in which to operate.

As the march began, a number of Indigenous women moved to the front, carrying a huge banner that read "Aboriginal Women Our Time Has Come". Throughout the march, these women sang and lead the march through the streets. Again, this was crucial for me, as the healing that has to be done in our Aboriginal communities is being lead mainly by women, the life force of our nations. Women are the keepers of tradition and the centre of our nations. It is important to me that our role be recognized as the most vital resource we have in creating our nations again, as we pick up the pieces that colonization has left us in, and resist the new wave of global capitalism (neo-colonization / re-colonization). The marshals for the rally kept people behind the singing women, saying "Aboriginal women first". This statement really hit home, especially as harsh words were being screamed behind me. The voices of angry men filled my ears at times and ripped at my sense of movement, but the song of the women was steady in the background and I allowed their voices to carry me through the march. As the speeches began when we reached our destination, surrounded by police and confined by barricades, Aboriginal women took the lead and offered our first words of motivation.

It moved me to see that through centuries of dedication to healing our nations, Aboriginal women's voices have remained strong and focused within the best interests of our communities. Finally, the rest of the women's movement and other liberatory movements are also recognizing the strength and the rightful place that Indigenous women have as the keepers of our culture, our knowledge, our source of both pain and healing. APEC has the best interests of Canada's economy in mind, and ultimately has at the forefront, the best interest of not just one nation, but a global economic force at the forefront. In subverting that, and resisting that, we must keep with what we know to be as close to the truth, to real emotion and life, as possible. We must allow ourselves to know the true effects of "liberatory practices" by acting with our hearts and our experiences. The media cameras can catch all the action on film, as they are drawn to sensationalist images and unbelievable truths, but the heart of the people is in the movement of resistance and that is where our answers lie.





“RIGHTS NOT BUCKS---APEC SUCKS!” chant at the Walk for Global Justice

By Lisa Hebden

The west coast wind was not the sole source of howling in downtown Vancouver last Sunday, as 12000 protesters stormed the streets. The Walk for Global Justice was a colourful family event organised to allow the public to express concerns about the meetings for the Asian Pacific Economic Cooperation, an agreement between 18 countries' leaders to open a large 'free trade' zone between them. The countries include Canada, USA, Indonesia, China, Singapore, New Zealand and Australia.

Many groups were represented in the march, including the Status of Women Action Group, Lesbians Against APEC, Students for a Free Tibet, as well as many other individuals with concerns about the future of education, Indonesia's role in the genocide in East Timor, environmental degradation, corporate greed, and other problems that can arise if trade borders are let down. People of all ages held hand made signs opposing the "APEColyptic Nightmare" of the massive job loss that APEC will produce for Canadians, and China's occupation of Tibet.

The march commenced at 1pm from the Plaza of Nations and terminated at the fenced off area around Canada Place and Gastown. A man dressed in a twelve foot high cardboard costume resembling Jean Cretien, sang "Don't cry for me Indonesia" while a very vocal "devil" navigated the crowd on stilts chanting "I love APEC!"

An array of speeches followed the walk, with representatives from Chile, East Timor, Sri Lanka, Burma, and B.C.'s First Nations people, Sven Robinson, and a variety of organisers involved with the People's Summit.

The speeches focused on affirmative action. An East Timorese musician stressed the importance of small actions of support, such as restraining from buying Nike products which are made in Indonesia. Despite the visible snipers on rooftops around the gathering, the atmosphere was a positive one.

Learn to hate APEC

by Nicole Verkerk

So my weekend started like this, my mom hated my hair ("but I like the colour") and she made it glaringly obvious that sometimes I am a wee bit too much of a follower. You see, she didn't understand why I was protesting APEC, and well, I couldn't really put it into words. I mumbled something about human rights violations, and the increased corporate take-over of the world, and realized that if I was going to have this opinion I had better be able to know what the hell I was talking about. Coincidentally, my mom was driving me to Vancouver where I was lucky enough to be going to the International Women's Conference Against APEC. Plenty of caffeine and brilliant women made it very easy for me to learn about the evils of APEC, which I can now share with you. Hopefully this will give you an introduction to hating APEC.

Is APEC that thing that causes traffic delays in Vancouver?

Let's start at square one. APEC stands for Asian Pacific Economic Cooperation. Eighteen "Economies" around the Pacific Rim are involved. The goal of the APEC agreement is trade liberalization, no tariffs, no taxes, no regulations, and no protection for domestic product. The APEC economies are pushing for free trade on a large scale.

What's wrong with free trade?

There is no human rights clause in the APEC agreement. None. This has everything to do with money and nothing to do with people. Oh, and this is something that the average person doesn't even hear about; all of the meetings have been behind closed doors. The process is entirely undemocratic. People of the countries involved have no say. Hopefully our demonstrations will make a difference, but as it stands presently, the agreement is between economies. No-body votes, and there is no debate. It just happens.

Lesson #1 APEC is just one piece of the global process.

Don't get all excited and think that if we can get rid of APEC everything will be solved. If it's not APEC, it's something else (watch out for the bigger, scarier Multilateral Agreements on Investments). Corporate globalization is the real problem here. These agreements are more formal documents that make what's already going on easier.

Lesson #2 The rich get richer, the poor get poorer.

Yup, one of those schemes again. You don't think that they'd be doing this if it was totally harmful and no one benefited, do you? Well, guess who benefits. If you think that it is women, people of color,

immigrants, "third world" people, indigenous people, disabled people, queer people, or any underprivileged group, think again. While the rich might not notice APEC, the poor are going to feel its impact.

Lesson #3 Key words: Increased privatization

That's what everyone keeps talking about. This is one of the many ways that globalization affects us. As corporations and capitalism gain more power, we forget about people. We are already seeing it: increased cost of education, threats to the health care system, and so on. This, of course, leads to more stratification of society. Fun.

Lesson #4 Profit, Profit, Profit!

You see the trouble is that all these dudes care about is profit. Corporations do not care about you or me, just the green stuff. Money, money, money. Big corporations can afford to go and produce their product overseas using cheap, exploitive labour, so they can push lower quality goods for a cheaper price. As our economy falls apart and we lose our jobs and inflation grows, we are forced to buy these substandard goods, and we are forced to keep the corporations growing and growing. If you're poor, you don't have many options. You need to buy cheap. The corporations make politically conscious choice very difficult.

Lesson #5 It's an evil world out there

At the conference I learned about some pretty upsetting things happening on our planet and to its people. You see, the corporations are completely interested in export, and thus the land is used in a way that will ensure the most profit. This can mean a number of things. Mono-cropping is popular, which means that there is a single crop developed at the expense of the number of things that usually grow. We can imagine what this does to the diets of the people living in the country, and of course if that one crop fails, well, too bad. Land is also taken over for horticulture, and is used to grow expensive flowers for export. Countries are being forced into our capitalist mess. Neat. Indigenous people lose their land because land claims do not apply under these agreements, and the 'economies' can just give or loan the land to whoever they want. (The loan system is really cool. It allows corporations to take the land for a number of years, completely deplete it and then give it back. Thanks guys!)

Lesson #6 Human Rights Violations

APEC and capitalist globalization ensure one thing, lots of human right violations. Increased numbers of sweat shops, lower minimum wage, child labour, and hazardous working conditions are some of

the treats we can look forward to. Oh, and by having the APEC conference in Vancouver and inviting the president of China and Indonesia, we are also supporting their horrible records of human rights abuses and the Indonesian invasion and genocide in East Timor. Jean Chretien, himself, actually said on the radio the other day that "human rights are not on the agenda." Go team!

Lesson #7 You sure don't have to look far...

to find human rights being abused. Right here in Canada we are participating in the genocide of the indigenous population. The amount of Indigenous people living in abject poverty is overwhelming. Recall that military force is used to "keep the peace" happens here too. Think Gustafsen Lake. Remember, don't point fingers without looking in the mirror.

Lesson #8 Ask yourself, what the hell is going on?

So, for this old APEC shindig in Vancouver, the government spent \$8.5 million dollars on policing. That is the largest military expenditure ever in Canada. They shut down streets, had snipers and helicopters, and loads of police everywhere. People were not allowed to walk down public streets. Protesters were pepper sprayed. \$8.5 million, people, this from a government with no money for education.

Lesson #9. Keep on learning.

These lessons are nowhere near complete. Please take some time and educate yourself on what is going on. It will affect you and many other people in the world. They don't want us to know what is going on, but we do, and we will continue to resist.



Ethnic English

by Alison Anderson

I grew up in Victoria, the Toronto-born daughter of an English immigrant. When I was a kid and the tourist mags would say how "British" Victoria was, I couldn't see it. When roommates from Toronto and Quebec would say how weird Victoria felt to them, I didn't understand what they meant. It wasn't until I spent a school year in Montreal, where cultures remain distinct, that I realised what this perception of Victoria as English was all about. Assimilation.

I grew up hearing how different Canada is from England, and how backward it is. Doing or saying something in a "North American" way was grounds for disgusted criticism in my family. Okay, so I was English more than Canadian.

From English teachers, English books and English TV (Monty Python) I learned that the English were superior and the British Empire could do no wrong. Yeah, definitely English.

Then when I was in elementary school, the British invaded the Falkland Islands and my pride collapsed. I identified myself as a pacifist, and here were the English going and starting a war! It was all downhill from there. But I still wasn't Canadian.

So how does an English-Canadian person grow up feeling so much not at home in her own culture, and how do I separate my family stuff from my British stuff and my Anglo-Canadian stuff, when it's all part of the same 'dominant culture' package? I'm still trying to figure out which qualities come from my English ethnicity and which are peculiar to my own wacky family.

Ain't She A Woman?

By Anna Isaacs

I'm tired, I'm bitchy and I'm freezing my ass off. The wind is whipping over the barren field they call the Ladner Exchange and is quickly chilling my fellow passengers and I to the bone. The bus to the ferry which we all wait for is, of course, late.

One passenger becomes so angry at the delay that they march across the parking lot to complain to the transit supervisor sitting in a nearby van. The conversation is abrupt and the complaineer returns to the shivering crowd and indicates across the parking lot with a dramatic flourish of disgust, announcing, "Ladies and gentlemen, there's a woman for you."

I glance in the direction indicated, curious to discover who our attention is being called to. The only thing in sight is a the transportation supervisor's van, and the only person in it is a very ordinary looking transit supervisor drumming her fingers on the dash in boredom. I am confused and slightly disappointed. There seems to be nothing even remotely interesting about her.

Frustrated grumbling begins throughout the crowd and a group of the more disgruntled people slowly congregate. The passenger who spoke to the supervisor quickly proves to be the most vocal, and they seem to be appointed the official leader out of respect for their bravery in having the nerve to complain. It takes a moment for me to get the gist of the conversation, but things quickly become clear phrases such as, "uppity," "smart alec," and "the good old days" begin emanating from the group. It appears they're indulging in a bit of good, old fashioned girl bashing. I am annoyed, but accustomed to such sentiments, and right now I am too tired or maybe just too apathetic to take up the cause in a battle I know I will not win.

"She needs a good husband to smarten her up." The sound of these words jolt me to attention, and the colour starts to rise in my cheeks. I glance around to see if this has caught anyone else's attention. The mother watching her three girls play nearby seems unperturbed but a few other faces have turned away or constricted slightly at the mouth in a small gesture of disapproval. The tirade continues with no further obstacle and now the participants start really getting into it.

"...don't know why they let women ... would teach her not to be so smart ... should have kept them in the kitchen"

It is these type of assumptions that make me so angry and upset. To even imagine that some people believe a "good husband" is physically violent and controlling scares me. Whether this woman was rude or not, they are blaming her for all the wrong reasons.

At home, criticism was a dominant form of social interaction. Nothing gentle or constructive about it; my tongue and my mind were my only weapons in a violent situation, and I kept them sharp. What worked at home didn't work so well in the world, where condescension and negativity weren't great qualities to bring to a friendship. I look around and see rampant sarcasm in English humour. I remember my first experience with 'non-toxic' humour - such a relief to be able to laugh whole-heartedly, with no one getting hurt. That must be a cultural thing, putting up walls and not letting anybody close, not just my family.

What about family secrets? Culture? Class. Ambiguities. My mum's family worked for upper class people, as governesses, groundskeepers, maids, and other roles harder to define. The things I learned about appropriate behavior, being respectable, unobtrusiveness, never asking for anything, and keeping family business secret from everyone else, had survival value for my grandparents and their families. For me, their oppressiveness outweighs their survival value.

I hold the image of my Nan sticking out her tongue behind the back of someone who was 'putting on airs', as a sign of the spirit under the subservience, at the same time as I long for direct, caring confrontation. The same people in my family who claim to hate "phoniness" put on smiley, everything's-wonderful-here faces and argue in riddles instead of clear statements about what they think and feel.

In coming to terms with my culture, I swung from absolute loyalty to absolute disgust, and then began tentatively to make my peace. In the past few years, I've remembered things that I still love about Englishness. Gardens. I love Grandad's neat edges and my mother's wild-looking profusions of perennial flowers. Children's books, full of adventuring and justice-

They disregard the reality that many women don't want to "stay in the kitchen," and those who do, including many married women, are unable to for financial reasons. It is very frustrating, but she can truly do very little about the bus being late. To me the most painful misconception is that her gender (and inevitably her race if she had been any colour other than white) has absolutely nothing to do with how polite she is, or how well she does her job. They have reduced this individual down to a woman stealing a job that belongs to a man, of which she is inherently incapable of performing with the same skill.

So what's the point in telling you about this depressing and frustrating incident? The passenger who is leading this verbal beat and cried out in disgust, "There's a woman for you," is a woman. And it is me, a woman, sitting passively by and watching it happen.

Throughout this entire episode I didn't raise one word of protest. It would have felt so good to tell her off on behalf of every woman who has to make a living serving this self righteous bitch a Big Mac, and who won't get the opportunity to tell her to fuck off for fear of losing their job and sinking even further below the poverty line, but I can't decide whether it would have done any good.

By hating her, I'm guilty of the same prejudices as her, because it's too simple to say she is a bad person. I'm sure this woman does good things too, and it's too easy to forget the context in which someone is raised. If I distance myself far enough from the pain of the insult, it makes me sad to think that a woman could hate women so much.

It's hard to recognize your enemies and accept that sometimes it's your sisters who are stabbing you in the back and your brothers who are giving you a helping hand. All of us desperately want to draw some clear line between those who help us and those who hurt us and the realization that there are no simple rules makes life pretty scary sometimes. Every act of trust becomes a risk, and judging people can seem an almost impossible task when you have to separate who people really are from who they're supposed to be.

I think I'm learning the distinctions.

Out of worst experiences, a bit of good does come, and I hope I've learned enough that I will speak out next time. I don't want to lash out when someone hurts me or endure the pain in silence, I just want to change the world. Maybe every once and awhile I can make people see what they're doing to others and themselves with their hate. For this valuable knowledge, I would like to dedicate this piece to that lovely lady out there who made my Wednesday night.

seeking. (Also full of sex-role stereotypes - there was often a fearful "little girl" the boys and tomboys had to take care of - not much for a gutsy "femme" to relate to.) A certain kind of spartan neatness, which I certainly never saw in my own home, but recognise immediately when I visit old women in their kitchens and see one china cup and saucer washed and drying on an otherwise bare counter. The tendency to invent silly words - nursery talk, I guess.

I still haven't figured out how much of my values and ways of being in the world came to me through my family, and how much is cultural, or if it is even reasonable to try to separate culture and family in my quest for a healthier self and to purge internalised domination.

I've started to speak 'Canadian' in the past few years, and what a relief! It feels like me.

Does anyone else find
patriarchal
institutions
stifling?



~ FYI ~ ☆ ~
Anti-APEC online

Organizations

- APEC Education NetworkEmail
Website: <http://www.apec.org/>
- APEC Secretariat Singapore
Website: <http://www.apecsec.org.sg/>
- Asia Pacific Center for Justice and Peace
Email: apcjp@igc.apc.org
- Focus on the Global South c/o CUSRI Thailand
Email: admin@focusweb.org
- Institute for Development Research
Email: idr@jsi.com
Website: <http://www.jsi.com>
- International Center for Human Rights and Democratic Development Quebec
E-mail: ichrdd@web.apc.org
- Nautilus Institute for Security and Sustainable Development
Website: <http://www.nautilus.org>

Websites

- APEC Education Foundation
<http://www.apeccef.org>
- U.S. State Department Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs
<http://131.193.155.53/www/regions/eap/index.html>
- United States Information Agency
<http://www.usia.gov/regional/ea/apec.htm>
- No to APEC
<http://carleton.ca/~shick/front.htm>
- Gabriela
<http://www.aloha.net/~ratlady/actfour.html>
- Peoples Campaign Against Imperial Globalism
<http://www.sequael.net/~bayan/pcaig.htm>
- APEC Alert
http://www.cs.ubc.ca/spider/fuller/apec_alert
- People's Summit
<http://www.hri.ca/calendar/november19-24.shtml>

how can i explain to you
the complexity of being
halfbreed
you who is privileged by the
stark simple nature of your whiteness

you say that i am ignoring
the fact that i am white
because i always speak as an aboriginal woman first
i do not hesitate to constantly
remind you of my nativeness
place of oppression inferiority

how can i explain to you
that it is my difference that shapes
the way i do not fit in society
that everywhere i go i see my absence
my being is denied by the whitewash
of it all
you can
never understand the pain of constantly having
to defend your very existence identity

for those who see me see my whiteness
privilege follows me everywhere
i am in a place of privilege
but when a man in my
sociology class talks about those indians
it is me he talks about
whether or not he knows it
my skin is white and i am but i am not
not not not what i am
where is the place just for me
to fit in
i will never fit i will always
challenge the structures set up by those
who would like to categorize and sort people in to
easily identifiable places of difference

i am colonization
the colonizer the colonized
privilege struggle survival
resistance renewal reclaiming the power to name oneself
this is me
i am invisible to you your white wall of misunderstanding

-Sarah Hunt

Poetry

Walking in Tanzania

I stop to put the purple bougainvillea in my journal. It is dark on the rice paper, like a bruise on white skin. Two men stop to watch me. Jambo, I say. Habari-aku? They laugh. Mzungu, one says: Tourist. I walk farther down the sand road, the fabric of my kanga sticking to my legs, my feet red and swollen with the heat. The man in town told me to take a mini taxi to the museum, but I walk anyway. There are no more cars here. The streets are full of people. Three children play with a deflated ball, their bare feet kick it against the side of an old blue house. Jambo, they call after me. Some women washing clothes look up and stop when they see me. They look at my sandals, the small backpack I carry. I say, Jambo. They don't smile, but return my greeting.

I am aware that my skin is white like the road. Some men outside a store the size of a closet yell things at me. I only understand mzungu. I am the different one. A woman of privilege I am aware of my watch that beeps on the hour. Here, the day is measured by the intensity of heat, the shadows that slide lazily around Baobab trees. The smell of warm maize beer hits me like an insult and I keep walking, strangely glad to be uncomfortable in my whiteness. For once, it is my enemy.

-Lisa Hebden

Best Friends

This is not sexual.
When my lips touch your skin
it is not lust
but desperation.
I am losing the battle for your life
because I can't force food
down your throat
or stop you
from throwing up.
I caress to keep you close
hold your hand just to hold on. They
don't know
that I lose you over and over
each day you are a new
prozac personality.

- Tara Macdonald

Blue

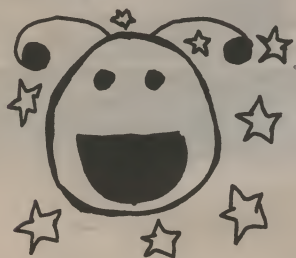
Today Barbie is wearing a blue dress,
the most powdery and feminine of blues.
Yesterday she went to the beach
and we used a scrap from mother's quilt
for her bikini top.

I wish I could wear a kleenex
and look as gorgeous as Barbie.

When I am older
I will look like her. I'm sure.
My hair will change from brown to blonde
and my eyes from mud to sky
My breasts will be the size of grapefruits,
a handful for my Ken. My waist
will be the circumference of my neck
if it kills me.

- Tara Macdonald

Raves



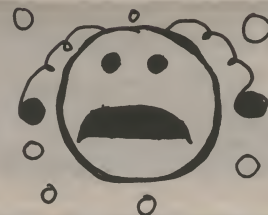
If you get a chance, or even if you have to make time, go to the beach and walk along the water. It is amazingly therapeutic and the sound of the water lapping on the rocks will make you think you are in heaven. Go especially when it's raining and wear your rain gear and then go home and have some tea. It may sound corny but you will soon realize how out of touch we have all become from natural environments. Do it!

The wonderful, fantastic, amazing movie "All Over Me" is now out on video and waiting at the video store for you to get your eager little hands on it. Rent it. Watch it. Love it. Watch it again.

Woohoo! Ta all those guys and gals who came out to boogie with us on our Lounge Night. You're all shaggin' fabulous baby!

if you love comics but are not impressed by the male dominated world of comic books look for ACTION GIRL. it's a collection of female drawn comics together in a fun, convenient comic book. find it at yer little old comic shop and buy it.

Rants



rrrr to the woman who dismissed the emily as a dyke group 1. why do you assume that anything that is woman-centered is lesbian? The emily is a diverse group of women and yes some of us are dykes and fuckin' proud of it. 2. being a dyke isn't the whole of our identity. we are more complex and brilliant than that to be reduced to a fragment of our marvellous beings. 3. why do you assume that we have nothing to offer you and that you have nothing to offer us (besides your homophobic dismissal)?

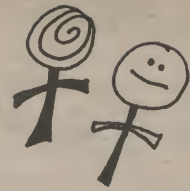
It sucks to feel my throat seize up and a sick feeling in the pit of my stomach when I walk alone at night and pass some guy just because he's a man and I'm a woman.

We were running out of class time before an exam in my psych class, and only had time to talk about either stress or cultural considerations. The prof chose to talk about stress. Like we don't already know about stress. Why are multicultural issues always treated as if they're not essential? They're not extras, they're the context we live in!

I hate that people see Nativeness as "in" and that it is supposedly marketable. Colonized peoples' cultures are being bought and sold in the capitalist system because our resistance was too great and the colonizer's culture has realized that if they can't kill us off they might as well make a profit off of our traditions. Think about what you buy and the historical significance of it.



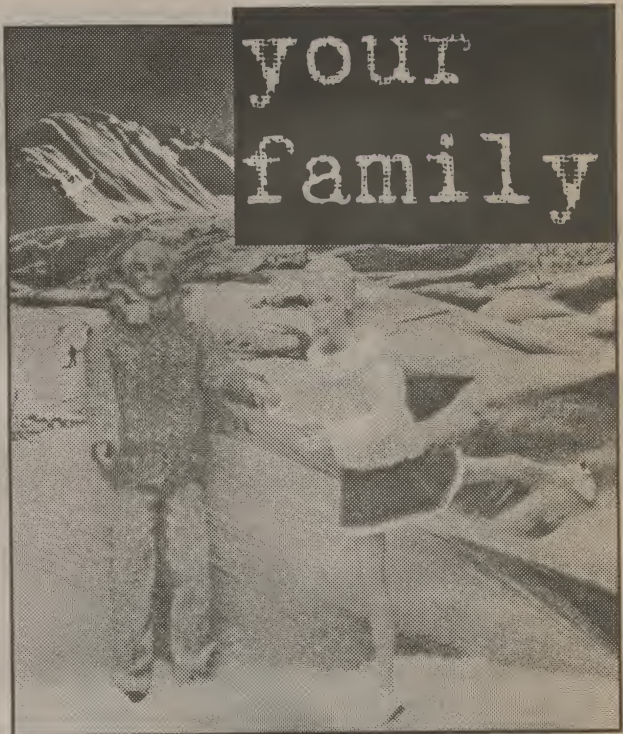
Stuffed



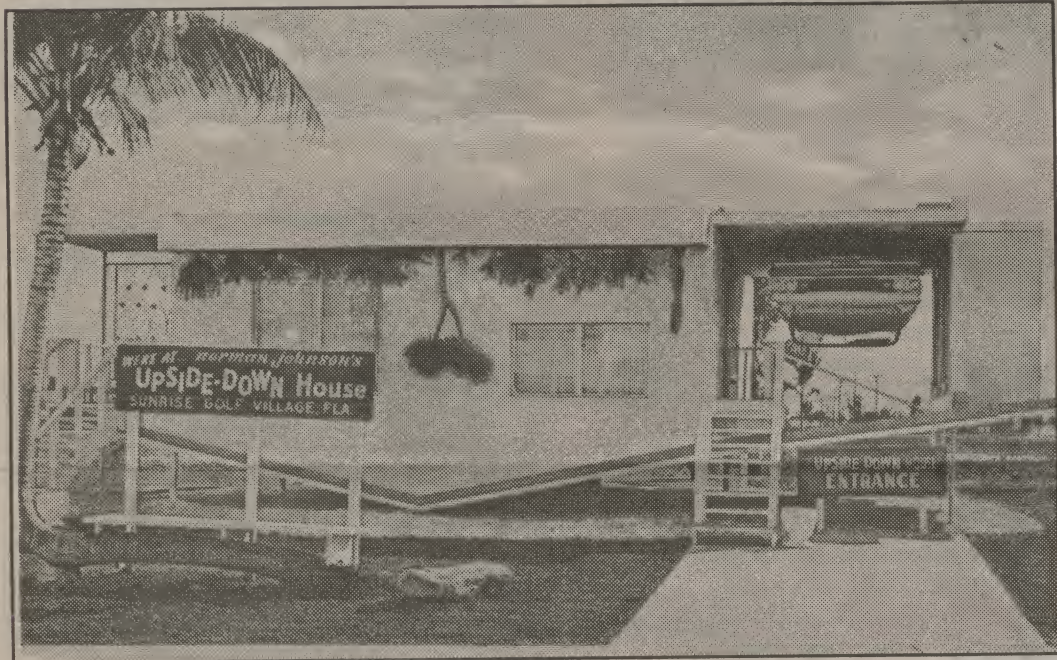
lady's
crusta
par
lyndsay



me and my family



your
family



my house



your drinks



our religion

